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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Colonizing Activities of the English Puritans. The Last Phase of the Elizabethan Struggle with Spain. By ARTHUR PERCIVAL NEWTON, with an introduction by CHARLES M. ANDREWS. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1914. 8vo, pp. x+344. \$2.50 net.

The title of this book is somewhat misleading. Mr. Newton does not attempt a complete survey of the colonizing activities of the English Puritans. About Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, for instance, he has little or nothing to say. His attention is almost entirely directed to the colonizing experiments of one particular group of Puritan promoters in the Caribbean. In the main his book is an account of the Providence Company.

No fault will be found with him on this score. For American students in particular, who are rather too likely to assume that Puritan colonists were of necessity New Englanders, he has rendered a timely service in revealing a phase of Puritan colonizing enterprise which was not only distinct from New England but in some respects hostile to it. The history of Providence in the Caribbean has hitherto been so little known that even well-informed writers have confused the place with the later New Providence in the Bahamas. Mr. Newton, from the ample material at his disposal, has been able to present a complete history of the colony from its inception in 1630 to its destruction by the Spaniards ten years later, with a detailed description of its manner of settlement, its types of settlers, and its economic and social problems, and of the features which made it attractive and the factors which determined its failure. In this respect alone he has made a valuable contribution to American colonial history.

But he has been wisely conscious of the fact that the significance of the Providence Colony lay not so much after all in the particulars of its brief and rather inglorious history, as in the light which it throws upon the plans and purposes of its founders. The list of subscribers to the first issue of the Providence Company stock includes the names of almost all the Puritan leaders in England who were prominent during the decade immediately preceding the Civil War. The Earl of Warwick, Lord Saye and Sele, Lord Brooke, Oliver St. John, John Pym, and close relatives of John Hampden and of Oliver Cromwell were among its members.

Indeed, its personnel was far more representative of the strength of English Puritanism than was that of the Massachusetts Bay Company. And since the promoters of Providence, unlike those of Massachusetts, remained in England to face the issue there, the history of the Providence Company is far more intimately related to the broader development of the Puritan movement in England. As Mr. Newton has shown, the Providence Company had a direct connection with the organization of the Puritan party during that obscure ten years from 1630 to 1640 when their parliamentary activity was in abeyance. By furnishing a nucleus for the periodical assembling of Warwick, Pym, and their associates, it enabled them, behind the screen of a commercial enterprise, to canvass the political situation and to make their arrangements for the coming struggle. From this point of view, as Mr. Newton has clearly demonstrated, the Providence Company played no inconsiderable part in the political and religious history of seventeenth-century England.

Yet it is easy to overemphasize the political and religious significance of what was primarily a commercial enterprise, and Mr. Newton has not altogether escaped this pitfall. It is by no means obvious, for instance, that the Providence promoters were seriously concerned with the problem of "providing a refuge for the oppressed victims of Laud's ecclesiastical régime." Mr. Newton believes this to have been the case, but he has hardly proved it. Such facts as he does adduce rather support the contention that Warwick and his associates went into the venture for what there was to be got out of it and were probably more inclined to exploit Puritan discontent for the purpose of getting desirable colonists than to exploit Providence for the benefit of Puritans. Probably the main purpose of the promoters was to plunder the Spaniards, though they were careful to conceal that fact behind a manifest intention to settle and trade. It is significant to observe that the idea of the colony was suggested by one of Warwick's subsidized pirates in the West Indies, that its location at the very gates of New Spain was ill adapted for peaceful exploitation, and that its charter of incorporation evidently contemplated for it a militant career. From the very first its colonists preyed upon Spanish shipping in the Caribbean. When Spain retorted by an attempt to capture the island in 1635, its promoters at once claimed right of reprisal and, having secured it from the king, directed their whole attention to the plundering of the Spaniards by land and sea. Mr. Newton would have us believe that this antipathy to Spain sprang from political and religious impulses and was an inheritance from Elizabethan days. It was indeed of a parcel with Sir Francis Drake's piratical

enterprises—a little religion and a little politics thinly smeared over a great lust for Spanish silver.

One of the most interesting chapters in the book is devoted to the relations between the Providence Company and New England. Here again Mr. Newton's study of Puritan colonization has thrown fresh light upon the history of the Puritan movement in England. In his admirable description of the Saybrook venture in Connecticut and again in tracing the relations between Providence and Massachusetts Bay he has borne testimony to the growing estrangement between two branches of the Puritan party which found its clearest expression in the Colonies but had its roots in England. In part this estrangement was due to religious differences which subsequently revealed themselves in the breach between Erastian and Independent in the Long Parliament. In part it was due to social and political differences. Mr. Newton points out that one strong motive which induced the Englishman to adventure his future in barren New England was the prospect of escape from the Stuart squirearchy which monopolized the land and the local government and controlled the House of Commons. Of this squirearchy the promoters of the Providence Company were nearly all members. And though, like the New England Puritans, they opposed the absolutism of the king, the absolutism of city merchant and country gentleman which they proposed to substitute in its place gave little prospect of relief to the artisan and the tenant farmer, be his religion what it might. It was the gradual realization of this fact by the rank and file that gave rise to the Leveller movement in England later and secured for John Lilburne his "three score thousand" followers. In the Colonies a similar demand for social and political equality expressed itself in the free land-holding and popular government of Massachusetts Bay. But the promoters of the Providence Company were quite out of sympathy with this movement. In Providence itself they monopolized both land and government. They clearly contemplated social and political distinctions in their projected Saybrook Colony. And it is striking to observe that the mere rumor of the migration of Lord Saye and Sele, Lord Brooke, and some other prominent members of their group to New England had the effect of stimulating aristocratic tendencies in Massachusetts itself. As time went on this divergence between the democratic and aristocratic elements in the Puritan party developed, in their colonizing activities, into covert hostility. There is some reason to believe that Pym and his colleagues were in part responsible for the slackening of migration to New England which set in after 1637, and there is no doubt

that they gave their countenance to a plan which was designed to despoil New England of her settlers for the benefit of their colony in the Caribbean.

Mr. Newton has developed other points as well which deserve more attention than space will allow. He has, for instance, made some valuable additions to our knowledge of the extra-parliamentary career of John Pym; he has disclosed the foundation of fact upon which the old story of a projected migration of the Puritan leaders to New England probably rests; he has contributed fresh information to the subject of the Puritan attitude toward negro slavery. But all these must be dismissed with mere mention.

The book as a whole is gracefully and carefully written. It is refreshingly free from the political and religious bias which so often disfigures historical studies upon the period with which it deals. To the economist it will appear, perhaps, that Mr. Newton has underestimated the importance of the economic factors involved in Puritan colonization. But no one will question the value of his contribution to the political and religious history of the early seventeenth century both in America and in England.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CONYERS READ

Where and Why Public Ownership Has Failed. By YVES GUYOT.

Translated by H. F. BAKER. New York: Macmillan, 1914.

8vo, pp. ix+459. \$1.50.

By far the most effective method of testing the feasibility of any program is to study its results. Facts, when correctly presented, are controvertible only in their interpretation. M. Guyot has in this book made a speciality of facts relative to public ownership in its innumerable forms in the different European countries and in New Zealand. Vigorous though the book is in the presentation, yet perhaps somewhat biased in the interpretation of these facts, its chief fault is its fragmentary nature. The author continually shifts from one enterprise to another, seemingly unmindful of varying conditions, making it difficult to follow him in what many times seem to be hasty generalizations to bear out a premise.

The purpose of the book is unmistakably expressed in its title. Guyot's conclusion is his fortress, and this work is manifestly presented as an arsenal of facts in defense of it. His philosophico-economic bases are interesting though debatable. He assumes three mainsprings of all